



March 16, 2004

The Hartley County Harvester

**Hartley County FSA
District 1**
PO Box 177
Hartley, TX 79044-0177

Voice: (806) 365-4453
FAX: (806) 365-4446

Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee:
Joe Parker
Jason Schniederjan
Bud Snead

Minority Advisor:
Babette Spinhirne

Farm Program Staff:
Glen Clugy, CED
Becky Brown, PT
Becky Voight, PT

Farm Loan Staff:
(Dalhart Office)
Marc Lathem, FLM
Barbara Koch, PT

Regular Committee Meetings
held on the 3rd Wednesday of
each Month.

Dates to Remember

**March 31st – Final Day to
request a 2003 Small
Grain CCC Loan**
**April 1st – Payment
Limitation Status Date**
**April 16th – Final Day to
Submit a EQIP
Application for the 1st
2004 EQIP Ranking**
**May 17th – Fall Seeded
Crop Certification
Deadline**
**June 1st – Final Day to
Enroll into the 2004
DCP without a Penalty**

On the World Wide Web:

USDA Washington Office
www.usda.gov

FSA Washington Office
www.fsa.usda.gov

FSA Outreach
www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach

Texas State FSA Office
www.fsa.usda.gov/tx

Hartley FSA
www.fsa.usda.gov/tx/tx205



Update Your DCP Contracts

Contracts for the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) must be updated each year. If you have a signed contract, we can issue 2004 direct payments. Before addressing the contract, farmers need to deal with land and business issues:

- Will you continue to rent the same property you rented last year? If not, notify the office so we can update your farm records or perform a reconstitution to remove land from your farming operation.
- If the land in your operation won't change, do you have a signed lease from the landowner? A signed rental agreement indicating you have land cash leased for 2004 is required to receive an advance payment.
- A cash-rent certification may be used if you rented the land last year, however, an advance payment cannot be issued for the farm until July 1, 2004.
- Are you changing the structure of your operation? For example, is the farm converting from an individual to a partnership or Limited Liability Corporation (LLC)? Are you changing shares within the business or is one of the shareholders leaving the business?

Take care of the paperwork now so you have money to operate with during the planting season. June 1 is the deadline to timely enroll. *Producers who enroll between June 2 and September 30, 2004 will be required to pay a \$100 user fee.*

Staff Reductions

Due to 2004 budgetary constraints, this office has been required to terminate Teresa Gates and Leanna Evans from the FSA staff serving you in Hartley County. We hope to continue to give you the FSA service you have grown accustomed to, however; please be patient with us in serving you. Your current FSA staff in Hartley County is Glen Clugy, County Executive Director and Becky Brown & Becky Voight, Program Technicians.

EQIP Applications

NRCS is currently accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). This program is designed to financially assist farmers and ranchers in installing soil and water conservation measures on their property. Applications received by April 16, 2004 will be evaluated and considered for approval during the 1st 2004 EQIP ranking period.

Planting Reminders

Under the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP), there are no set-asides and no acreage restrictions for crops including wheat, corn, sorghum, soybeans, oats or hay. The only exceptions are fruits and vegetables (FAVs).

To prevent an FAV penalty being assessed to your farm, fruit and vegetable crops cannot be planted on DCP base acres unless the farm has an established history of producing FAVs, the producer has an established history of producing the specific FAV, or the FAV is double-cropped with a covered commodity and the practice has been approved by the County Committee. As of this date, the only double-cropping practices approved by the County Committee are pinto beans or black-eye peas following wheat or barley.

An acre-for-acre DCP Payment reduction will be applied for all FAV acres planted on DCP contract acres under the farm or producer history exceptions.

Please check with this office prior to planting any fruits or vegetables on your farm so that we can keep you informed on how the plantings will affect your participation in the DCP farm program.

CCC-1099 Update

During the last week of January, producers who received an FSA payment from FSA in 2003 received a CCC-1099 in the mail from our Kansas City office. The CCC-1099 is a report to the IRS about FSA payments made to you during 2003.

If you received a CCC-1099, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with your records to see that the amounts are correct. Some reports indicate the amount associated with the MILC program is incorrect. If you find the amounts are not correct, or if you have a question concerning the form contact us. If you choose to visit the office, bring the CCC-1099 with you so that we can identify any questionable items. If there is an error, we will furnish you with a corrected form CCC-1099.

Reporting Market Gains to IRS

Farm Service Agency does not report market gains earned from Commodity Certificate exchanges for loan collateral to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on the CCC-1099 or CCC-1099-G.

Any market gain you earned is considered income and it is your responsibility to report this income to the IRS.

Highly Erodible Land (HEL)

Before you drop the plow in the ground, ask yourself if you know the residue requirements and cropping rotation for the field. If not, check the conservation plan you agreed to with NRCS. Violating Highly Erodible Land (HEL) rules can cost you all program benefits from the MILC, Direct and Counter-Cyclical, disaster or other federal farm programs.

Wetland Compliance

Land that is classified as a wet area and converted after November 28, 1990 is considered a violation of Swampbuster provisions of the Clean Water Act. Converted wetland violations retain violation status indefinitely or until the area is restored. Producers who purchase acreage with a converted wetland determination are not automatically in violation unless he or she plants an agricultural commodity on the converted ground. It is the producer's responsibility to know the "history" of land you acquire to make sure you are in compliance.

If a producer is determined to be in violation of wetland provisions, you may lose USDA program benefits. For example, if a landowner produces a crop on a converted wetland, he or she may lose benefits for that year. Or, if a landowner converts a wetland after November 28, 1990, you may lose benefits for the year that the conversion took place, and for the years that follow, until the wetland functions and values are restored.

If you have any doubts, you are advised to acquire an official wetland determination from NRCS before planting or making ANY changes to the land – this is particularly important to new owners/operators. Once a crop is planted in violation of the HEL or wetland provisions, it is too late. You will be ineligible for all USDA benefits.

Land Changes

If you have purchased land, sold land or are renting different land, make sure you report the changes to the FSA office after they occur. For farm ownership changes you will need to provide a recorded deed or recorded land contract.

Status Date

The status of an individual or entity on April 1 of the applicable program year is the basis for determining the number of "persons" for payment limitation purposes for that year. Actions taken by an individual or entity after that date to increase the number of "persons" will not be recognized for the current program year. For example, if an individual holds more than 50 percent interest in a corporation, as of the status date, the individual and entity will be considered one "person" for the applicable year.

Important Poultry Disease Information

Recent outbreaks of highly contagious poultry diseases - Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) and Avian Influenza (AI) have sparked a national U.S. Department of Agriculture educational campaign to make commercial, hobbyist and game-bird poultry producers aware of clinical signs of these diseases, preventive measures to stop the spread of the diseases and responsive measures that must be taken if producers suspect an outbreak within their flock. It is extremely important that bird-owners educate themselves regarding these diseases as the result of an outbreak is almost always lethal to the flock resulting in significant economic impact.

Any poultry or pet-bird owners or veterinarians who suspect a bird may have END or AI should immediately contact State or Federal animal health authorities.

For more information regarding clinical signs of diseases, prevention and decontamination, contact:

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services
Emergency Programs
4700 River Road, Unit 41
Riverdale, MD 20737-1231
Telephone (301) 734-8073
Fax (301) 734-7817
E-mail: emoc@usda.gov
or visit the APHIS Web site at
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov>



If you have any questions about this newsletter or any FSA program, please come by this office or call us at (806) 365-4453 extension 2.